

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01  
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-13  
/105 W

-----022826 281457Z /41

R 281030Z DEC 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4321  
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
AMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BELGRADE 9197

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, ET, SO, SU, YO  
SUBJECT: GOY OFFICIALS'S COMMENTS ON THE HORN AND MIDDLE EAST

SUMMARY: IN DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR DEC 27, FSFA  
ASSTSEC OSTOJIC IMPLIED THAT EPMG IS FINALLY BEGINNING  
TO FOCUS ON POLITICAL RATHER THAN EXCLUSIVELY MILITARY  
SOLUTIONS TO ITS PROBLEMS AND SEEMS INCREASINGLY AWARE OF  
IMPORTANCE OF ENHANCING ITS INTERNATIONAL POSITION.  
HE CLAIMED THAT SUPPORTERS BOTH OF SOMALI INVASION AND  
ERITERAN SECESSION ARE BEGINNING TO HAVE  
SERIOUS "SECOND THOUGHTS". GOY EXPECTS TO SEND DELEGATION  
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TO MOGADISCIO AND RECEIVE DELEGATION FROM ADDIS IN  
JANUARY. YUGOSLAVS CONSIDER "VERY IMPORTANT AND VERY  
ENCOURAGING" RECENT "SUDANESE MOVE" TO IMPROVE RELATIONS  
WITH ETHIOPIA. ON MID-EAST, OSTOJIC SAID "WE ARE NOT GOING  
TO SUPPORT THIS EXTREME TRIPOLI PLATFORM". ARAFAT ARRIVED IN  
BELGRADE DEC. 27. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING DEC 27 CALL BY AMBASSADOR ON FSFA ASSTSEC OSTOJIC (AFRICA, ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA), LATTER CONVEYED THE FOLLOWING OF POSSIBLE INTEREST ON SITUATION IN THE HORN.

2. OGADEN CONFLICT. LONG HAVING VIEWED EPMG'S FUNDAMENTAL WEAKNESS AS POLITICAL INEPTITUDE, YUGOSLAVS COUNSELED ETHIOPIANS IN FACE OF INITIAL SOMALI MILITARY ONSLAUGHT OF THE NEED URGENTLY TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH SUDAN AS WELL AS WESTERN COUNTRIES AND OF NEED TO DEVELOP DEEPER, MORE SUBSTANTIVE RELATIONS WITH OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES, ETHIOPIA'S "NATURAL ALLIES". DESPITE EPMG'S CONTINUING PROPENSITY TO FOCUS ON MILITARY APPROACHES TO ITS PROBLEMS, AS WELL AS "POLITICAL DISADVANTAGE" IT IS NOW INCURRING IN ACCEPTING LARGE AMOUNTS OF SOVIET ARMS, OSTOJIC SAID ETHIOPIANS WERE AT LONG LAST BEGINNING TO DEVELOP THEIR "INTERNATIONAL POSITION". IN CONTRAST, HE TERMED SOMALIS' CURRENT INTERNATIONAL POSTURE "NOT VERY GOOD". WHILE MOGADISCIO HAS HAD "MANY AND DIVERSE" SUPPORTERS IN WHAT HAS BEEN VIEWED AS EFFORT TO "PRESSURE THE ETHIOPIANS", "VERY FEW" HAVE PROCLAIMED THEIR SUPPORT FOR ACTUAL INCORPORATION OF OGADEN INTO "STATE OF SOMALIA". OSTOJIC SARCASTICALLY CHARACTERIZED SIAD BARRE AS MAN OF "GREAT AMBITION" WHO WANTS "FIVE STARS ON THE SOMALI FLAG" AND "ALREADY THINKS HE HAS TWO" (THE SECOND BEING OGADEN). ASKED WHAT HE THOUGHT FUTURE HELD IN STORE WERE OGADEN FIGHTING TO CONTINUE UNABATED, OSTOJIC SAID ONLY THAT HE FOUND "ENCOURAGING" RECENT CONFIDENTIAL

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MENGISTU STATEMENT THAT WHILE HE WILL "PUSH" SOMALI TROOPS OUT OF ETHIOPIA, HE WILL "NOT TRANSFER THE BATTLEFIELD TO SOMALIA". OSTOJIC ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT "NO ONE COULD BLAME HIM IF HE DID". ASKED TO ASSESS CUBANS' ROLE IN ETHIOPIA, OSTOJIC REFERRED DISPARAGINGLY TO "INFORMATION BEING DISSEMINATED BY SIAD BARRE" CLAIMING LARGE NUMBERS OF CUBAN REGULARS ARE ENGAGED IN OGADEN FIGHTING". "CUBANS HAVE TOLD US THIS IS NOT SO ... BUT THAT THERE ARE INSTRUCTORS. WE TEND TO BELIEVE THERE ARE NO TROOPS", HE SAID. ON QUESTION OF SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THE HORN, OSTOJIC LAMELY ARGUED THAT IN VIEW OF SOVIETS' OBVIOUS DISPLEASURE WITH SOMALI EXPULSION DECISION, IT WAS "LOGICAL" THAT THEY WOULD "BECOME MORE ENGAGED" IN ETHIOPIA.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BELGRADE 9197

3. YUGOSLAV-SOMALI RELATIONS. OSTOJIC READILY  
ACKNOWLEDGED THAT YUGOSLAV-SOMALI RELATIONS HAVE DVURED  
OVER OGADEN CONFLICT AND THAT SOMALIS CONTINUE TO  
CRITICIZE GOY'S DECIDEDLY PRO-EPMG STANCE. NONETHELESS, HE  
SAID, SOMALIS WISH TO "MAINTAIN COMMUNIATIONS" WITH GOY  
AND RECENTLY SUGGESTED EITHER THAT YUGOSLAVS SEND A  
DELEGATION TO MOGADISCIO OR RECEIVE SOMALI DELEGATION IN  
BELGRADE FOR DISCUSSIONS. HE ADDED THAT IN JANUARY YUGOSLAVS  
"WILL PROBABLY SEND SOMEONE" TO SOMALIA. HE ALSO SAID GOY  
"HOPES SOMEONE FROM ETHIOPIA WILL BE HERE IN JANUARY"  
FOR TALKS. (ONE WONDERS WHAT BRAVE SOUL MIGHT BE CHOSEN TO  
LEAD SUCH A DELEGATION, IN VIEW OF THE FACT, AS OSTOJIC POINTED  
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OUT, THAT THREE OF MOST RECENT HEADS OF ETHIOPIAN DELEGATIONS OT  
YUGOSLAVIA WERE EVENTUALLY EXECUTED.)

4. ERITREA. AS HAS BEEN THE CASE WITH OGADEN CONFLICT,  
OSTOJIC SAID EPMG, IN ITS APPROACH TO ERITREAN PROBLEM, HAS  
LONG BEEN PLAGUED BY "TOO MUCH IMILITARY BRAINS (SIC) AND  
TOO LITTLE POLITICAL BRAINS". OSTOJIC REITERATED GOY POSITION ON  
NEED FOR RESTORATION OF ERITREA TO U.N. SANCTIONED  
AUTONOMOUS STATUS, AND SAID GOY HAS CONSISTENTLY

ARGUED THIS POSITION IN TALKS WITH ETHIOPIANS. REFERRING SEVERAL TIMES TO VISIT TO BELGRADE LAST WEEK OF SUDANESE FONMIN AL TAHIR, (REPORTED SEPTEL), OSTOJIC SAID SUDANESE MAINTAINED THAT ERITREAN "LIBERATION MOVEMENT" NOW CONTROLS 90 PERCENT OF ERITREAN TERRITORY. AL TAHIR HAD CONVEYED IMPRESSION THAT WHILE ERITREANS' EXTERNAL SUPPORTERS COULD FULLY SUPPORT THE GOAL OF AN AUTONOMOUS ERITREA, THEY WERE HAVING "SECOND THOUGHTS" ON THE QUESTION OF ACTUAL SECESSION. THE REASONS FOR SUCH RESERVE, OSTOJIC SAID, WERE THEIR REALIZATION OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF SECESSION FOR THE REST OF AFRICA AND THE FACT THAT WHILE ARAB SUPPORTERS HAVE VIEWED AN INDEPENDENT ERITREA AS NEAR CERTAIN RECRUIT FOR ARAB LEAGUE, ERITREANS NOW ADAMANTLY CLAIM THEY ARE "NOT ARAB BUT ERITREAN". OSTOJIC TERMED IT "VERY IMPORTANT AND VERY ENCOURAGING" THAT "SUDAN HAS MADE MOVE" TO RECONCILE WITH ETHIOPIA (REF TO FREETOWN STATEMENT). "SUDAN WANTS BETTER RELATIONS WITH ADDIS AND WE THINK ETHIOPIA WANTS THE SAME", HE STATED.

5. MIDDLE EAST. TURNING BRIEFLY TO THE MIDDLE EAST, THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE THOUGHT PRESIDENT TITO'S REMARKS ON ISRAEL ON THE OCCASION OF YUGOSLAV NATIONAL ARMY DAY DEC 22 (BELGRADE 9149 NOTAL) HAD BEEN "CONSTRUCTIVE". OF PARTICULAR INTEREST WAS OSTOJIC'S LATER COMMENT THAT "WE ARE NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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GOING TO SUPPORT THIS EXTREME TRIPOLI PLATFORM; IT'S IMPOSSIBLE". BUT GOY WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PALESTINIANS, HE ADDED, AND INFORMED AMBASSADOR THAT ARAFAT WAS DUE IN BELGRADE WITHIN HOURS. (ARRIVAL OF ARAFAT, ACCOMPANIED BY KADDUMI AND OTHERS, ON PREVIOUSLY UNANNOUNCED VISIT WAS CONFIRMED BY BELGRADE RADIO AFTERNOON OF THE 27TH.) ASKED ABOUT ASSAD'S POSITION, OSTOJIC SAID ONLY THAT IT APPEARED ASSAD IS "NOW DEDICATED TO THE TRIPOLI PLATFORM". ON SADAT-BEGIN UNDERTAKING, OSTOJIC SAID AL TAHIR, WHILE OBVIOUSLY HOPEFUL, HAD NOT SEEMED CONVINCED OF ITS ULTIMATE SUCCESS. AMBASSADOR SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHEN ASKED BY OSTOJIC WHETHER SECRETARY VANCE WILL ATTEND CAIRO TALKS.

6. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF THE EXTENT OF GOY'S CONTACTS WITH THE PLO AND MOST OTHER PARTIES TO MIDDLE EAST AND HORN CONFLICTS, WE OUGHT TO CONSIDER CONSULTING WITH YUGOSLAVS FAIRLY REGULARLY ON THESE ISSUES BOTH HERE AND IN WASHINGTON, BEARING IN MIND THE POSSIBILITY OF EMPLOYING THE GOY TO CONVEY MESSAGES IF AND WHEN THE NEED SHOULD ARISE. WHEN IT IS DECIDED WHETHER THE SECRETARY WILL BE GOING TO CAIRO, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF WE COULD INFORM THE YUGOSLAVS IN ADVANCE OF PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT.  
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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINS, ET, SO, SU, YO  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009